

# Celebrating May Ng: The woman behind the OBE

I was delighted to be asked to write about my friend and mentor, May Ng, following the announcement that she has been awarded an OBE for Services to People with Diabetes and Services to People with Autism and Disabilities. I have known May for the past 10 years, and I was lucky enough to join her team as a trainee doctor when I specialised in paediatric endocrinology and diabetes. She took me under her wing and I can confidently say that most of what I had achieved during my training years was because of her encouragement and support. She continues to inspire many young doctors, as well as more established doctors, myself included. May is an incredible role model, a trailblazer who wears many hats.

## Academic achievements

May completed her basic medical training from Australia on a full scholarship. Over the years,



Figure 1. May Ng, OBE.

she has gone on to achieve various degrees, including an MSc in endocrinology and diabetes, a PhD as part of a Medical Research Council grant award, a Masters in Law and an MBA in healthcare and finance.

She is an avid researcher who has published numerous peer-reviewed articles, and contributed to national guidelines, e-modules and books. I have now worked with her on various projects and have been amazed by her extremely organised approach to work, with a promise of a prompt reply within minutes of sending her a query. As a trainee, whenever I had needed any help or guidance, she would reply within minutes pointing me to relevant resources needed to answer my query.

## Professional appointments

May leads the diabetes team at Southport and Ormskirk hospital NHS Trust and has been instrumental in getting all the resources needed to provide the best care for her cohort of children and young people (CYP) living with diabetes. The team has won several national awards, including the NHS Parliamentary Awards in 2020.

As chair of the Association of Children's Diabetes Clinicians (ACDC), she has led on the production of several national guidelines that have contributed to improved care in CYP with diabetes and significantly reduced the variations in level of care across different units. Through May's dedication to the paediatric diabetes, she has contributed hugely to the organisation of a successful ACDC conference every year since 2014. The ACDC annual conference is well regarded and ensures continued professional development for the professionals working within paediatric diabetes. May is also a part of the NICE diabetes committee and contributed to the latest update to the national guideline,



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*Diabetes (type 1 and type 2) in children and young people: diagnosis and management* (NICE, 2022).

### **Advocate for people with diabetes**

May has been a vocal advocate for reducing the inequalities in outcomes for all people living with diabetes. She believes strongly that all people with diabetes should have equal access to the latest diabetes technology and equipment to allow them to manage their condition.

Furthermore, as well as a focus on improving day-to-day care of people with diabetes, May is also involved in important research looking at future improvements in diabetes care. For example, she has been involved in trials looking at diabetes screening. She is also the chair of the National Institute for Health Research Clinical Research Network Diabetes Research Steering Group for Children.

Her role in the international arena as a member of the European Society of Paediatric Endocrinology has been very important to develop a global e-learning platform for diabetes and endocrinology healthcare professionals.

These resources are freely available and have been translated into several languages.

She also contributes to charitable ventures as Chief Medical Advisor for the Action for Diabetes charity. This charity aims at improving health outcomes for the disadvantaged youth living with type 1 diabetes in Southeast Asia.

### **Helping people with autism**

As well as her work in diabetes, May is a strong advocate for people living with autism and regularly takes part in various charitable ventures to raise autism awareness. Her book *A journey with Brendan* is a personal account of her life as a paediatrician and mother to a child with autism. Reading this book helped me to see a different side of May and understand her dedication.

May is a mentor and a friend who remains an inspirational figure for me and many others. I look up to her and I am inspired by her numerous lifetime achievements. Her latest award, a prestigious OBE, is yet another well-deserved feather in her cap. ■

#### **Reference**

NICE (2022) *Diabetes (type 1 and type 2) in children and young people: diagnosis and management*. NICE, London. Available at: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng18> (accessed 22.06.22)